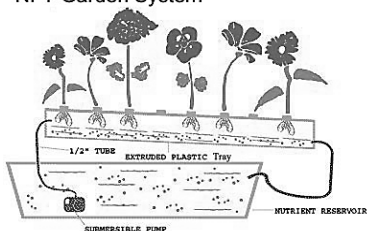


Hydroponic Technology

NFT Garden System



A hydroponic system should be designed to fulfill the specific requirements of plants with the most reliable and efficient method(s) of nutrient delivery. The three major plant-requirements that a hydroponic system must satisfy are:

- 1) Provide roots with a fresh, well balanced supply of water and nutrients.
- 2) Maintain a high level of gas exchange between nutrient solutions and roots.
- 3) Protect against root dehydration and immediate crop failure in the event of a pump failure or power outage.

Hydroponic systems can be either active or passive. An active system

includes a mechanical means for re-circulating the nutrient solutions, while a passive system relies on capillary action, absorption, and/or the force of gravity to replenish roots with nutrient. Besides being generally more efficient, and therefore more productive, a nice feature of active

hydroponic systems is how easily they can be implemented in an automated greenhouse. The automation system does not have to be complicated to provide outstanding results. Just as a fan may be connected to a thermostat to control temperature, a timer may be connected to a pump to deliver nutrients to the plants as necessary. If such a system is designed properly, a large nutrient reservoir could feed the crop for weeks before needing a refill. In this scenario, as long as the system is reliable, the garden will continue to thrive indefinitely without the need for continual supervision.

Next week: Hydroponic Technology Cont'd

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